

**Virginia Comprehensive Assistance Network [VA CAN] Meeting  
October 22, 2003**

**Meeting Notes:**

**Attendance:**

Richard Rasmussen – DEQ, Linda Hawkins – IRS, Mary Beth Hawn – IRS, **Nichelle McDaniel** - VDMBE, Scott **Dailey** - SBA, Mark **Courtney** – DPOR, **Dyanne Pergerson** – VA CAB and Kanawla Medical, Tracy Garland – Radford University, Keith Boisvert – DEQ and Chuck McCarty - DEQ.

**Note:** **Bold** indicates first time attendee.

**1. Opening/Introductions**

Round-the-table introductions and descriptions of programs represented. Richard reminded the group that this meeting was almost the first anniversary of VA CAN with its first meeting held on November 21, 2002.

**2. May 13<sup>th</sup> Event Survey Status**

Tracy gave an updated report on the event and survey. The survey [copy distributed at the meeting] was again discussed. The survey was developed for distribution to the original mailing list for the event [approximately 3000]. The survey is also posted on the web at:

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=93154248448>. Due to a variety of events, the survey was never sent out and its website was not publicized.

After much discussion, the group decided that at this point mailing the survey in its current form would not be of benefit. Scott suggested the possibility of doing a phone survey with about two dozen, randomly chosen people from the original mailing list.

Tracy reported that there is \$1,233.61 in remaining funds from the event.

**3. Future Events – Discussion**

Scott Dailey mentioned that VA CAN could be included in some of the SBA's events. Ie. Next June SBA will cosponsor a major, 3-day conference regarding loans in Charlottesville. He felt that VA CAN could be given a free booth to exhibit materials.

Richard mentioned that Tracy and Bill Scruggs had sent him information of upcoming events as requested at the last meeting. Copies these have been emailed to everyone and were distributed at the meeting.

Richard mentioned that he had spoken with Stu Neal, Director of the Center for Entrepreneurial Development, Community College Workforce Alliance about an event that he is planning for

early Spring. Stu had mentioned that IRS was again going to be one of his sponsors. Their last event was very successful. Richard thinks we should try to be a part of this event.

Scott mentioned that for future VA CAN events any advertising brochure/flyer should include a list of exhibitors as participants so folks know who they will have the opportunity to see. With the Radford event we had listed the participants as Sponsors which does not necessarily carry the same connotation. He also passed around a copy of the 2003 SBA Guide for VA Small Businesses. He mentioned that once VA CAN has a website it could be included in a future edition of the annual guide.

There was much discussion about developing a VA CAN website and what it might include and how it might be designed. Scott suggested using a smart program through a variety of questions steer [by direct link or contact information] an inquiry directly to the appropriate contact[s] in and out of government. "A Rolodex of Government, etc. contacts for businesses."

Mary Beth suggested that the group develop a list of products – ie. the directory, the May event, the VA CAN display for a booth, etc. Also to develop a list of future products, ie. a website. She also expressed concern about the purpose of VA CAN – is it a group to exchange information, an outreach group, both, etc.?

Tracy mentioned the possibility of developing a strategic plan for VA CAN. Richard said that he would contact Adam Saslow [a private consultant that moderated the 2002 Providers Forum] about attending the December meeting to aid in the discussion of developing a strategic plan for VA CAN. Richard also will contact Kim Finch in Delaware to see if their group has developed a strategic plan. Richard mentioned that strategic planning could be a possible focal point for another Providers Forum, possibly one in 2004.

There was discussion of inviting potential members to future meetings. Mary Beth mentioned the Corps for National Services and the Governor's Commission on National and Local Services [DMBE volunteered to contact the Commission]. Tracy mentioned the VA Incubator Network. It was agreed that all should be invited to attend the next meeting.

There was also discussion of the Small Business Initiative being led by DBA and how it might relate to VA CAN. Richard indicated that the existence and mission of VA CAN were provided to DBA when the agencies were initially surveyed for Small Business resources. He said that when he receives a final report on the initiative he would share it.

#### **4. Show and Tell**

Richard mentioned various materials that he has emailed to the VA CAN group, ie. a Federal construction guide, Green Gazelles.

Tracy discussed a new online "Waste Exchange" that has been established through Radford University's Business Assistance Center, <http://exces.radford.edu:8001/Exces/>

Linda mentioned that the current IRS outreach topic is “Employment Taxes”. She is looking for events to attend to spread the word.

#### **5. Need Additional Information for VA CAN Booklet**

A copy of the current version of the directory was passed round the table. There is still a need for the “blue page” information from most VA CAN members. It would include a one sentence description of each program you want listed with the appropriate contact information [phone number, address, web site, etc.].

#### **6. Follow Up/Next Meeting**

**Our NEXT MEETING -December 16, 2003, DEQ Piedmont Regional Office  
10AM to 12:00 PM. Please RSVP by December 5, 2003.**

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